



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee

The Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee is an active voice in advocating that all students receive superior educational services enabling each student to achieve optimum success throughout the school years and into the world of adulthood.

March 21, 2013

6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

RI Parent Information Network
1210 Pontiac Avenue Cranston, RI 02920

Meeting Minutes

Present: Kate Barnas, Wilfred Beaudoin, Eileen Botelho, Ann Brockmann, Jennifer Connolly, Susan Donovan, Cris Brodeur, Amy Canario, Joanne Eichinger, Gillian Elliot Pearis, MD, Rosemary Gomes, Patti Hien, Pamela O'Brien, Mary Pendergast, Craig Levis, JoAnn Naning, Robin Pacheco, Robert Wall

Absent: Princess Sirleaf Bomba, Laura Laviano, Allyson Dupont, Deborah Garneau, Rosemary Gomes, Laura Laviano, Cynthia Notarianni, Louise Tillinghast, Lori Barden

RIDE/RITAP Attendees: David Sienko & Beth Pinto

** Notes that prior notice was given regarding absence*

Call to Order, Welcome, Agenda Review: The meeting was called to order at: 6:35PM by Sue Donovan

Announcements:

The College Forum was held at Providence College on March 9th; 65 students attended. It was well received by the attendees; especially the discussion group facilitated by a sampling of current students with special needs. The workshop may be renamed College and Career readiness for 2014, to better address the needs of all graduating high school students.

Driver's Ed is available for diverse learners; handouts available

Beyond Parent Night has been rescheduled to March 26th.

The Parent Survey, which is in its 7th year, will be coming to your mailbox the first week of April. A preliminary notice will go out this week. Teachers are being requested to contact families personally in an attempt to increase the number of surveys returned.

Joanne Eichinger requests that everyone present review the excel sheet of categories of representation of members on the committee. We need to maintain 51% representation of Parents on the committee.

Panel Discussion:

Telephone (401)222-4600 **Fax** (401)222-6178 **TTY** (800)745-5555 **Voice** (800)745-6575 **Website:** www.ride.ri.gov

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Alice Woods from RIDE facilitated a panel presentation to increase awareness of positive behavior interventions and supports, and restraint and seclusion procedures used in private special education day schools. The panel included: Michael Foley, Clinical Director from the Eleanor Briggs School, Patricia Martins, Education Director at the Bradley School and Dr. Karen Cammuso and Dr. Greta Francis Clinical Psychologists from the Bradley School. The facilitator and panelists addressed how RI Physical Restraint Regulations protect our children and the impact of the implementation of these regulations. Discussion included the type of positive behavioral interventions and supports that are utilized, how the decision is made that physical restraint is necessary, procedures that are in place during and after a restraint occurs. Panelists described the training provided to staff regarding PBIS and physical restraint. Alice Woods provided an update on Brochure developed by RISEAC, RIDE and RITAP to inform parents and reviewed RIDE data.

Old Business:

The restraint subcommittee presented proposed changes to the current reporting forms, distributed copies of the long and abbreviated forms, as well as, proposed changes for the training for all staff within RI.

Membership recruiting is addressed. It is suggested that we consider adding an OT and/or PT to the committee. Joanne reports that she will take a look at which districts are under represented on the committee at present and see if there are any potential candidates from there. It is suggested that Mary Pendergast address the membership drive at the next SEAN dinner meeting

A directory of RI private special education schools is presented to the membership

Director's Report:

1. Board of Education holds initial meeting

A new phase of school governance in Rhode Island began as the newly constituted Board of Education held its initial meeting. The 11-member Board of Education, established in law last year, has taken on the powers and duties of two former boards, the former Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education and the Board of Governors for Higher Education. The Commissioner has had many meetings and conversations with Board Chair Eva-Marie Mancuso, about building an even stronger partnership between our PK-12 education system and our colleges and universities, particularly regarding college and career-ready standards, workforce development, and data sharing.

2. SurveyWorks attains 100-percent school participation

This year 100-percent of public schools in the state participated.

3. Parent Survey Getting Underway

The 7th annual Special Education Statewide Parent Survey will be administered from late March to May 2013. Coming Soon flyers will be arriving in mail boxes later this week and surveys will be mailed out next week. The *School Effort to Partner with Parents Scale* (SEPPS) is the measure RIDE uses to meet Indicator 8 Annual Performance Report requirements for the Office of Special Education Programs. RIDE continues to work with the vendor Piedra Data Services, as well as LEAS, LACs and parent partners at Parent Support Network and RI Parent Information Network to support the SEPPS administration. The survey will be available in four languages; English, Spanish, Portuguese and Khmer. Marketing will include ads in the *Sunday Providence Journal* and on the Pro Jo website, RIPTA internal and external signs in English and Spanish, and radio Public Service Announcements in English and Spanish.

4. Rhode Island recognized for management of Race to the Top

Following the very positive Race to the Top Year 2 Report from the U.S. Department of Education and the Year 3 On-site Review that a team from the U.S. Department of Education conducted in February, Education Secretary Arne Duncan recognized Rhode Island as one of three states making excellent progress under this

federal grant. Reform Support Network has prepared two case studies about best practices in Rhode Island: one focusing on our EdStat process for monitoring progress under the grant and the other on our Collaborative Learning for Outcomes process, through which LEAs come together in teams to develop strategies and practices in common.

5. Funding available for renovations to make schools accessible to those with disabilities

The Governor's Commission on Disabilities provided information that Rhode Island has funds available under the Help America Vote Act to ensure better access into schools that are used as polling places during elections. The Commission has further information about this funding opportunity on its website, www.disabilities.ri.gov. You can call Mr. DeGrave, the Assistant State ADA Coordinator, at 462-0108.

6. U.S. Department of Education issues letter on implementation of equitable services for students in nonpublic schools

The U.S. Department of Education issued a letter announcing the plan for improving the implementation of equitable services requirements under applicable programs authorized by the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* and Part B of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*. The plan, which aligns with current statutory and regulatory requirements, demonstrates the U.S. Department of Education's commitment to ensure effective implementation of these equitable services provisions. The plan does not place new requirements on state and local educational agencies. Rather, it focuses on how the U.S. Department of Education will support the collaborative work of state and local public-school officials and private-school leaders to ensure the efficient and effective implementation of these requirements and the delivery of services.

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii/nonpublic/equitable-services-implementation-plan.html>.

7. Education Secretary Duncan calls on schools to reduce gender-based violence

Education Secretary Arne Duncan requested immediate action to reduce gender-based violence in schools and ensure all students are safe. The letter was released at a White House event on teen dating violence prevention. The U.S. Department of Education National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments also released a new training module, "Get Smart, Get Help, Get Safe"

(<http://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/index.php?id=1511>) to help school nurses, counselors, and psychologists identify and respond to signs of abuse.

8. RIDE sought participants for focus groups on WaytogoRI website enhancements

Recently, RIDE reaffirmed its support of WaytogoRI with funding from a federal grant. The grant will support the implementation of a high-school electronic transcript as well as further enhancements to our portal. We are entering an exciting phase of this work, and focus groups were held this week to gain information about your ideas and feedback on the upcoming enhancements to WaytogoRI.

9. LEAs can apply to participate in 2013-14 initiative on proficiency-based graduation

The RIDE Office of Multiple Pathways in partnership with the Center for Collaborative Education Quality Performance Assessment Program are sponsoring the Strengthening Proficiency-Based Graduation (SPBG) Initiative. This initiative aims to provide two cohorts of schools with professional development and inclusion in a state network to develop and implement high-quality, local, common performance assessments as part of meeting the requirements of our Diploma System. The Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the Rhode Island Foundation provide funding for this initiative. If you have any questions about this opportunity, please e-mail Cali Cornell, at cali.cornell@ride.ri.gov. A project flyer with the details of the project and the application are available on the RIDE website, at:

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/Secondary/default.aspx#Performance Assessments](http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/Secondary/default.aspx#Performance_Assessments).

10. Educators, families and students stepping up to new graduation requirements:

Before the release of the NECAP results, about 300 students statewide had signed up for use of our Virtual Learning Math Modules to improve mathematics achievement. Within two weeks of the release, 2,300 students had signed up – and the number is growing steadily! There are new and revised documents including a progress-plan template, new general letter about the graduation requirements that can be shared with families

and students. Examples of effective intervention strategies and documents including descriptions, effectiveness measures, and contact information will be posted on the website. Please visit the [Secondary Webpage](#) to access these materials and resources that have been developed to support school teams that are implementing progress plans and intervention strategies. Please contact Stacy Mello, at stacy.mello@ride.ri.gov, if you have questions about the available resources.

11. Sequestration:

At this point, we have little information about how sequestration will affect us in Rhode Island at the local level. Education Secretary Arne Duncan did assure states that there will be little effect on education during the current school year and that funds already allocated will be unaffected. The Secretary also noted that, when the anticipated 5-percent cut to federal programs goes into effect during the next school year, districts will feel the cuts in different ways – some will have cuts of a little more than 5 percent, some a little less. This situation will be monitored closely, and OSCAS Director will provide the Committee with any information received about the effect of sequestration.

12. Secondary Transition Institute Held March 14-15

The Secondary Transition Institute was held last week and over 20 school districts sent teams. Each team developed a plan for improving transition services in their district.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was initiated by Eileen & seconded by Mike
Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Recording Secretary:
Kate Barnas, RN
RISEAC website: www.riseac.org